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CIA Funds Went to Latin Leftists

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NEW YORK.—An international
and economic research organization
headed by former Socialist
Party leader Norman Thomas
has received over \$1 million
from a foundation identified as a
conduit for Central Intelligence
Agency funds.

Activities of the organization,
the Institute for International
Labor Research (ILR), were fi-
nanced almost totally from 1961
to 1963 by the J. M. Kaplan
Fund of New York, which con-
gressional investigators de-
scribed in 1964 as a channel for
agency money. The funds were
not exhausted until last year, of-
ficials of the research group said.

Money was used to estab-
lish and operate the Institute of
Political Education (IPE) in
Costa Rica, which has trained
many Latin American leaders in
"democratic leftism"; a re-
search institution in the Domi-
nican Republic under the regime
of reformist President Juan
Bosch, who was ousted in a
rightist coup in 1963; and a pub-
lishing firm in Mexico City.

Mr. Thomas, who was chair-
man of the now-defunct New
York research group, said he
had been unaware of the
CIA's role in financing these
operations.

"I acknowledge my own
stupidity," he said. "It was
my business to know, but
I didn't."

Mr. Thomas's organization re-
ceived \$1,043,940 from the Kaplan
Fund from January, 1961, to
September, 1963. This sum rep-

resented all but about \$25,000 of
the total funds received in that
period.

The New York institute was
formed largely under the guid-
ance of Sacha Volman, a Ru-
manian-born U.S. citizen who
had been working for Radio
Free Europe (RFE), widely re-
ported to be subsidized by CIA.
He introduced Mr. Thomas in
the idea as a means of fostering
anti-Communist democratic ac-
tivity in Latin America.

ASKED FOR FUNDS

Incorporated in February,
1957, the organization at first
had little money with which to
operate. In 1961 Mr. Thomas
asked Jacob M. Kaplan, philan-
thropist and former president of
the Welch Grape Juice Co., for a
contribution from the fund he
had founded.

The fund provided an initial
sum of \$55,000 in January, 1961.
It made 16 subsequent payments.
The last, in September, 1963,
amounted to \$160,000.

From 1961 to 1964, Thomas'
New York-based institute con-

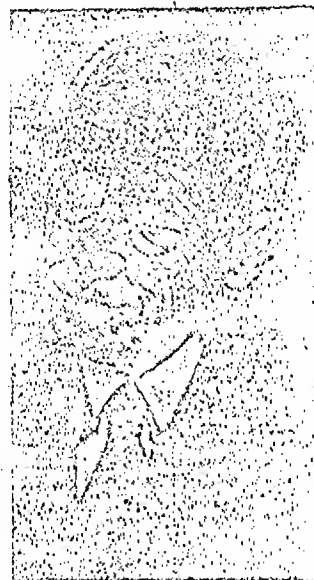
tributed \$258,000 to the Insti-
tute of Political Education in
Costa Rica, whose policies
were controlled by 17 Latin
American left-of-center politi-
cal parties. Bosch was one of
the instructors in the institute,
which taught democratic lead-
ership techniques. The most
influential institute leader was
former Costa Rican president
Jose Figueres.

In 1964, the Kaplan Fund cut
off its subsidies to the Costa Ri-
can center with the explanation
that its operation by political
parties might have jeopardized
the fund's tax-exempt status.

OFTEN OPPOSED

Mr. Thomas pointed out that
his New York group had often
opposed U.S. government policy.
After the U.S. military interven-
tion in the Dominican Republic
in 1965, it distributed a publica-
tion severely condemning this
action.

"No foundations," he said,
"and certainly not the CIA, ever
gave any suggestions as to what
we should do or not do."



NORMAN THOMAS

Head of Institute for
International Labor Research.

*Org. of Institute of Political
Education*

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